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JORDON TO GERING

Aleged Murderer of Joe Layton Returned from Lincoln Penitentiary to Stand Trial

Will Jordan, alleged murderer of Joe Layton, was brought to Alliance from Lincoln Sunday on 43. It was thought that 303 would wait as usual for 43, which was several hours late, but it pulled out at 1 o'clock, the regular time. As a result, Jordan was confined in the county jail here until Monday noon. He was in the custody of Sheriff F. A. Aaron, of Scotts Bluff county, and was handcuffed and shackled with heavy chains.

Jordan denied all guilt of the crime when interviewed by a Herald reporter at the county jail Monday morning. When asked regarding the bloodhounds which, it is claimed, went straight to him when they were brought upon the scene of the murder, Jordan said the dogs had first walked over to the hired girl, Miss Catlett, then to Mrs. Jordan, and lastly to him. Speaking further of the bloodhounds, Jordan said he had become acquainted while at the penitentiary with a private detective who told him the evidence of bloodhounds was absolutely worthless, and that they were trained to do as their master bid them, and not as their inclinations led. This detective, according to Jordan, would come to the trial if wanted and swear to these facts.

When asked about the gun and cartridges that were found on the Layton premises shortly after the murder, Jordan said, "I don't have any idea where they came from. As I understand it, they will have to prove that the gun was mine, and they can't do that because I never saw it."

He carried on his person a number of letters from his brothers in Oregon and from his daughter, Mrs.

Layton, wife of the murdered man, who is confined at Gering. The letters were very affectionate, especially those from his daughter, and expressed hope that they would soon be liberated. Mrs. Jordan is at North Platte, and the hired girl, Miss Catlett, is at the home of her parents near Gering, under heavy appearance bond.

Jordan has been married twice. His first wife re-married several years ago and is now living in Idaho. He said that she would likely come to Gering to attend the trial, as they had been corresponding since her second marriage. The fact that Mrs. Layton, his daughter, is twenty years old, and Jordan himself is forty caused some speculation as to the time of his first marriage. Asked concerning it by a reporter, he said that he was only a "kid" at the time of his marriage. His wife was fourteen years old, and he was about seventeen. He said they parted several years ago by mutual agreement.

At the time of the murder there was considerable talk connected with Jordan and his wife being at the Layton home at the time of the killing. His home was in California, and he had been at the Layton home only a short time before the murder. Monday Jordan commented on this fact, and explained that he had come to Gering at the request of Mrs. Layton, who was about to undergo a serious surgical operation and desired his presence. He said that she was operated upon twice, the operations being some time apart. After the first one he returned to California, he said, thinking the daughter would recover. A short time later he received another letter from her saying that the first operation was unsuccessful and that a second was imperative. The letter asked him to come at once and bring Mrs. Jordan with him. He said he had some difficulty in raising the money to make the trip, and that he only arrived the day before the operation was to be performed.

He described minutely the positions of the occupants of the house on the night of the murder, and his actions in blowing out the light and rushing to the neighbor's for assistance, as Mrs. Layton had faintly.

When asked if he had secured the services of a lawyer, Jordan said he didn't know whether or not one had been procured, but that his brother was looking after that part of it. He said that his young wife was in a delicate condition, and that while he was at Lincoln a story was spread that he had been foully dealt with. He said the story was so horrible that she was nearly prostrated, and the child was still-born, nearly resulting in her death.

Jordan complimented the management of the state prison on several occasions, saying that the warden had treated him better than anyone with whom he had come in contact since his arrest. He was taken on to Gering Monday afternoon in the same condition he arrived in Alliance—handcuffed and shackled. His

appearance in the depot caused considerable sensation, and many hurried to doors and windows to watch him. He seemed oblivious to the gaze and entered the train as soon as it had been made up. Sheriff Aaron was evidently of the opinion that he was traveling with a "bad man" and ran no risks of his prisoner making a getaway.

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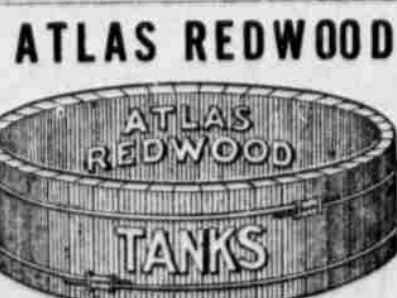
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